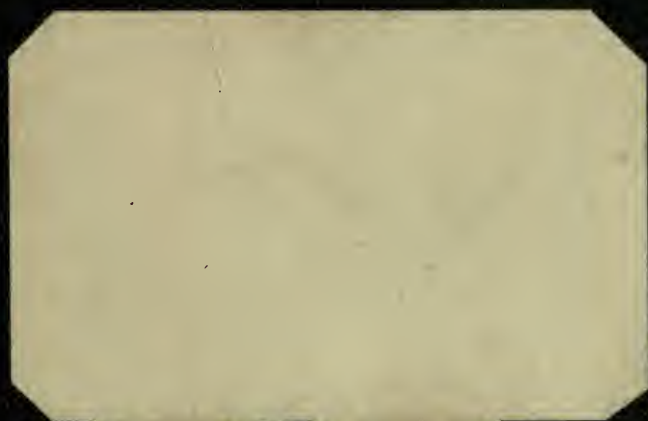


F

68

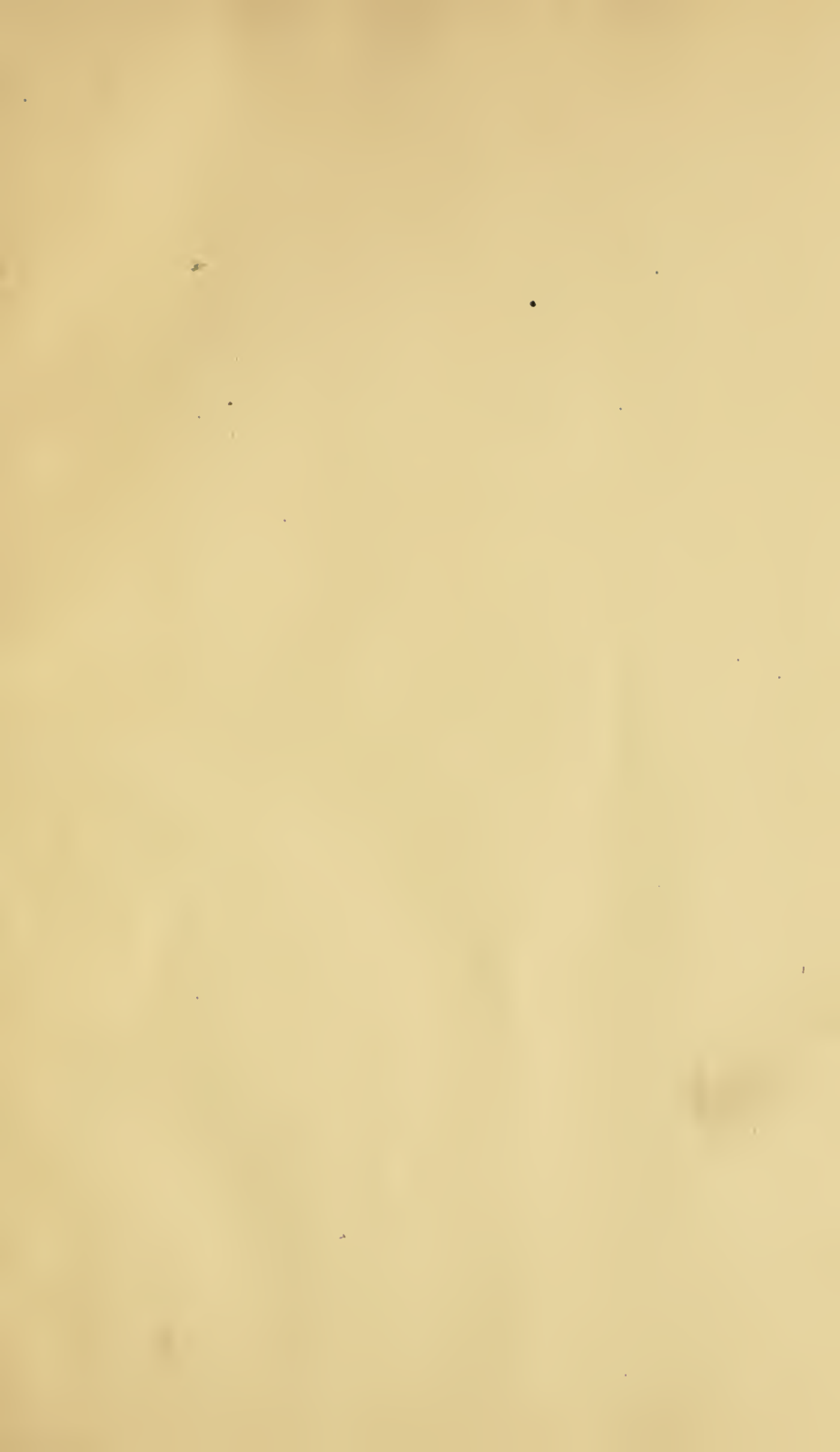
L12





Class F 68

Book .L12



THE PLYMOUTH PILGRIMS.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

FIRST CHURCH, RANDOLPH,

DECEMBER 25, 1870,

BY

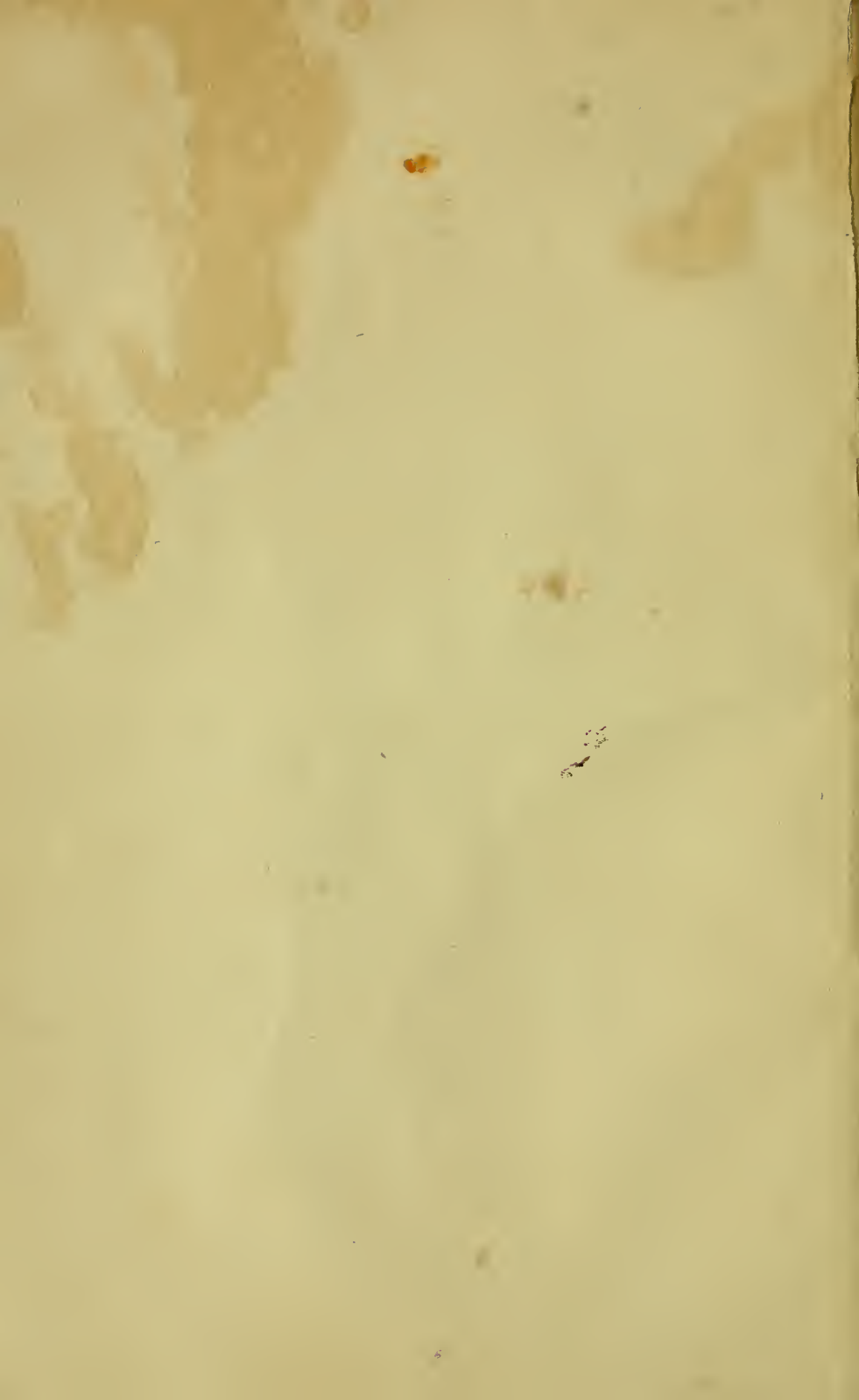
REV. J. C. LABAREE.

PRINTED BY REQUEST.

RANDOLPH, MASS.
PRINTED BY MRS. S. P. BROWN.

UNION STREET.

1871.



THE PLYMOUTH PILGRIMS.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

FIRST CHURCH, RANDOLPH,

DECEMBER 25, 1870;

BY

REV. J. C. LABAREE.

PRINTED BY REQUEST.

RANDOLPH, MASS.
PRINTED BY MRS. S. P. BROWN.

UNION STREET.

1871.

F 68

.L 12

The printing of this sermon has been requested for local circulation with the hope that it may contribute to the correction of some popular errors concerning our Pilgrim Fathers. It was prepared with no thought of publication, and a thorough revision has not been possible. The various authorities so freely quoted will be recognized by most readers without references.

18-41091

SERMON.

I SAM. 2: 30.

“THEM THAT HONOR ME I WILL HONOR.”

When a good deed is nobly done, it deserves to be held in honor. The excellence of an action does not consist in the pomp and splendor of its performance. The humblest may be the grandest, the most lowly may be the most honorable. This is a principle in the divine government. They who lightly esteem God, and who rise to place and power in disregard of the strict principles of right, they shall in time become obscured or despised. “The good only are immortal” in love and honor. This judgment can be perfectly carried out only in the world to come. Yet here on earth God has allowed to it great prominence. The veneration of our fellow-men is not overlooked when the Lord affirms, “Them that honor me I will honor.” History is just. And it becomes an important agency under the direction of Providence in accomplishing the divine purpose of giving honor to whom honor is due.

Your attention is invited to the illustration of this principle in the history of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, and the continued and increasing honor which is bestowed upon them.

Before the days of Luther there were christians in England who had been taught the simple truths and forms of christianity by John Wickliffe and his disciples.

When the great Reformation spread over Europe, its course in England was arrested midway by king Henry the Eighth. He denied that the pope had power over the people of Britain; and, refusing allegiance to Rome, became himself a most tyrannical pope to all his subjects. "He undertook to determine what his people should believe," and pronounced and executed the most fearful penalties against all opposition to the doctrines he had decreed.

In the reign of Edward the Sixth the Protestant religion received the favor of the court and king. But whatsoever the king chose became the law for every subject; and John Hooper was persecuted for refusing to wear in the pulpit certain vestments prescribed by the authorities of the church. He is the first person who took such a stand for a simpler form of dress in worship. The idea being generally received at that day that "no priestly act was of any value unless performed in a priestly dress." Queen Mary came to the throne a bigoted Catholic. She restored the power of the Romish Church and kindled the fires of bitter persecution. In the long and prosperous reign of her successor Elizabeth, Protestantism was once more restored. But the maiden queen loved imposing ceremonies of worship, and severely annoyed those ministers and congregations that did not in all respects conform to the standard set by royal decree. A purer form was believed by many to be essential to genuine protestantism; necessary in order to fix a gulf between themselves and Romanism; and it was further thought that only the natural and unpretending forms had any warrant from the New Testament. The men who sought to restore the methods of worship to more apostolic simplicity were called Puritans. They did not differ in theology from Elizabeth and the great Bish-

ops of the English Church. Their doctrine was the same, in church polity they differed. The Puritans did not allow that the monarch had the right of dictation in matters of religion. They did not believe that the Romish church was a genuine branch of the true church of Christ, but that it was no church at all, and that it was of no importance whatever to be able to trace the apostolic succession of the ministry through the Romish Church back to the apostles.

The Puritans also held that whatever matters were not expressly commanded by authority of Scripture, "ought not to be made necessary by human laws," for thus the civil magistrate might "dress up religion in any shape and instead of one ceremony he might load it with a thousand." On these points the Puritans took their stand in opposition to the Established Church of England.

But both Puritans and Churchmen "agreed too well in asserting the necessity of uniformity in public worship, and of using the sword of the magistrate for the support and defence of their principles." The churchman persecuted the Puritan, and the Puritan persecuted the churchman, just as often and as far as they could grasp the power to do so. The standard of uniformity according to one was the decision of the king or queen, and the statute law. With the other the standard was fixed by local or general synods, (or assemblies of the ministers and elders.) But according to the belief of both these parties, the civil magistrate had full power to enforce upon the entire population the uniform standard of worship. *Toleration* was not then recognized in Great Britain as a principle of christianity. The Catholic, the Episcopalian, the Puritan, felt authorized to force all opponents into agreement with their own ideas.

This was in the sixteenth century. It was an age of great progress in the knowledge of the Bible and christianity. When that century opened, the darkness of the middle ages still enveloped the religious world. The great Reformation of Luther had not burst forth. Over continent and island the tyranny of Rome held undisputed sway.

But when the sixteenth century closed the light of truth had risen upon the lands. The Bible had been given for the first time to the masses. Their hearts had been opened by the power of God's Spirit, and they had received the glad tidings joyfully. But let us not wonder that men did not all at once grasp every truth. Let not too severe judgment be passed on the Puritans for the failure to cast out every evil of the old systems.

Luther retained many Romish errors even after he left that church, but we are charitable toward him in those particulars, remembering the great good that he did achieve. We dwell upon the practical reforms he did produce. We compare him with the church from which he came out, and give him honor. Thus should we judge the reformers in the English Church. It seems small and mean and unworthy to rail at them for what they did *not* do, when the victories they did win were priceless, and naturally led to still greater advances. The Puritans fought many a hard battle in the cause of religious liberty. They were far in advance of any other equal number of men that England had ever produced.

Yet it should be understood distinctly that the main body of Puritans were even at this time churchmen. They had not severed their connection with the Established Church. They had only objected to certain of its usages, and hoped to effect a change. They did not as a body for-

sake the old church and establish a new one till a much later period.

At the same period in England there was a class of humble, earnest people who could not find in the New Testament authority for putting the control of religious belief in the hands of either *bishops* or popes. They believed that men had the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences with none to molest or make afraid, and that a company of believers associating themselves and electing their own pastor in accordance with the directions of the New Testament, were as truly a church of Christ as any other.

They held that no church had authority over other churches, but that churches should "walk by one and the same rule, and by all means convenient to have the help and counsel of one another in all needful affairs of the church."

Persons holding these views *separated* from the Established Church and formed themselves into independent churches, governed only by the majority in the congregation of believers. Hence they were called at first Separatists, and afterwards Independents, and, still later, Congregationalists.

It should be understood, however that various other sects and parties holding different views from those just mentioned came out from the state church, and for their errors and evil influence the original Congregationalists were in no wise responsible.

During the first year of the seventeenth century, in the north of England and in the obscure town of Scrooby, there was gathered a little congregation of this class of christians who had separated from the English Church and worshiped by themselves. That humble band of disciples

have become immortal. They are the men who, a few years later, landed on Plymouth Rock and laid the foundations of civil and religious liberty in this country.

Forced by the vigilance of sheriffs, and the malice of their enemies to meet in secret, they changed their place of worship from time to time, but could not escape persecution. They resolved to go where they could enjoy the liberty of worshiping God in the way which to them seemed right; believing that their happiest lot would be in "A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King."

This congregation was not the first band which England had exiled by the rigor of her laws. Probably at different times thousands had thus fled from their mother country. In 1592, the entire body of Separatists in England petitioned to be sent to "a far country which lieth to the west from hence in the province of Canada." This petition was however denied, and only straggling bands escaped, running the gauntlet of fierce persecution in their efforts to reach an asylum where they would be free to worship God.

Was it unmanly to escape the perils of their mother country and forsake her fortunes forever? We cannot answer for all the exiles, but the Pilgrim band that went from Scrooby met this question fairly. They were loyal souls. England was dear to them. But still nearer to their hearts lay the duty of loyalty to God—and a true concern for the interests of their posterity. "Persecution might cause their children to abjure their faith." Nor were our Pilgrim fathers such passive characters as to resign themselves to injustice when there was a possible way of escape. They were men of action. Men of noble daring: Though humble in social esteem, they were born to be leaders—not followers of mankind. It was in their

hearts to provide an asylum for persecuted men — to open in Christ's name a refuge for the exile from spiritual oppression.

The little company from Scrooby, about one hundred in number, were led by Rev. John Robinson, a man of extraordinary abilities and graces. They went first to Amsterdam, for religious toleration was then allowed in the Low Countries. Here they found other exile churches, disturbed however by internal dissensions. Robinson sought diligently to restore peace to his contending countrymen. His efforts were fruitless and rather than dwell in such an atmosphere of discord, the Scrooby church removed to Leyden. For twelve years they dwelt in that ancient city of Holland. For twelve years they were trained under the superior wisdom and piety of Robinson their pastor. He became a man of note and power; and was honored by the University of Leyden, as were also a few other members of this congregation. Many able and enduring works were published from his pen. By the friends of Calvinism in the University he was selected as their champion in a public discussion with a celebrated divine. They were not disappointed in their choice; he discomfited his opponent and gained increased distinction. And it is said that the Republican government of Holland was only refrained by fear of England from bestowing especial honor upon this humble but extraordinary pastor of the exiled church.

Yet the people over whom, by their own choice, he exercised the pastoral office, were as remarkable as their leader. During the twelve years of their life in Leyden not a single suit or accusation was brought against one of them. "The merchants strove to get their custom, trusted them when they lacked money, employed the honest strangers

and paid them above others." Such was the pastor, and such his people, and "such was the mutual love and respect which this worthy man had to his flock and his flock to him, writes their historian, Bradford, that it might be said of them as it was once said of the famous Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and the people of Rome, that it was hard to judge whether he delighted more in having such a people, or they in having such a pastor."

This people determined at length to leave Hollaud. To their loyal hearts it was grievous not to live under "the protection of the state of England." They were likely to lose their mother tongue and the name of Englishmen. Few of their oppressed brethren at home would come out to them while under such circumstances in a foreign city. The influence of their example and of their strict Scripture principles was not felt as they had hoped it would be upon the Dutch among whom they dwelt, and especially the Sabbath was not reformed. Their children were under temptation from foreign habits. Approaching old age would aggravate many of their trials, and perhaps scatter their flock. The fierce and desolating thirty years war was just beginning to envelop both the north and south of Europe. "And lastly, and which was not the least," they said, "a great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation for advancing the gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world; yea though they should be but as stepping stones unto others for the performing of so great a work." Such were the pure and exalted motives which actuated these men in their purpose to colonize America.

The obstacles to be encountered were fearful to contemplate. Their peaceful residence in a friendly city was to be abandoned. England, still so dear to them, must be

forever left. By bitter experience they already knew the meaning of hardships, and were not like children laughing at dangers they could not appreciate. For months they, their wives and little ones, were to be tossed upon the merciless ocean. If the weary voyage should be safely over, not a friendly face awaited their arrival. Not a welcome voice or sound could they expect. The beating surf, the moaning of the winds in the interminable forests, the bark of the wolf, the yell of the savage — these were the only greetings that awaited them, when wasted and solitary they should sit in their cabin doors and long for friendship and sympathy.

A thousand tongues were raised to turn them from so rash a purpose. Unnumbered obstacles, real and fancied were suggested as hindrances. Timid souls spoke with horror of the perils they should encounter. Wise men soberly argued against an enterprise such as the world had never yet witnessed. To hope for success was to shut their eyes to the common experience of mankind. It was but burying their talents and their lives in the ocean or the wilderness.

Among their own number the solemn project so fraught with weal or woe was prayerfully and deliberately considered. “Many particular things were answered and alleged on both sides. They affirmed that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courages.” It was granted “that the dangers were great but not desperate; the difficulties were many but not invincible; and all of them through the help of God by fortitude and patience might either be borne or overcome. True it was that such attempts were not to be made and undertaken without good ground and reason; not rashly

or lightly as many have done for curiosity or hope of gain. But their condition was not ordinary; their ends were good and honorable; their calling lawful and urgent; and therefore they might expect the blessing of God in their proceeding. Yea, though they should lose their lives in this action, yet might they have comfort in the same, and their endeavors would be honorable."

With this spirit they made the great, the tremendous venture. Not as ignorant fanatics, not as self-appointed martyrs seeking a notoriety in death they could not gain in life. Not with reckless indifference to the fiery trials before them did the brave and pious Pilgrims charter the *Mayflower* for its one immortal voyage. By the pen of their noble pastor they presented to the world the reasons for their unprecedented endeavor. But knowing that men might still misunderstand and deride their pious motives, the eloquent Robinson in closing his "apology," turns to the ear of the Almighty with this moving appeal: "If so it come to pass that there be few found who will so far stoop as to look upon so despised creatures, and their cause, this alone remaineth, that we turn our faces and mouths unto thee, O most powerful Lord and gracious Father, humbly imploring help from God towards those who are by men left desolate. There is with Thee no respect of persons. They who truly fear Thee and work righteousness, although constrained to live by leave in a foreign land, exiled from country, spoiled of goods, destitute of friends, few in number, mean in condition, are for all that, unto Thee O gracious God nothing the less acceptable. Thou numberest all their wanderings, and puttest their tears into thy bottles. Are they not written in thy book? Towards thee, O Lord, are our eyes; confirm our hearts, and bend thine ear, and suffer not our feet to

slip or our faces to be ashamed, O thou both just and merciful God."

To the exiles themselves, now about to venture upon pathless seas, and inhospitable shores, the beloved pastor also addressed himself. Unable to accompany them he bade them farewell in a discourse of which only fragments are preserved. But they are set like gems upon the page of history. Even now they are employed to beautify and emphasize the noblest utterances of the nineteenth century in behalf of civil and religious liberty.

"I charge you," said this early and wonderful advocate of liberty of conscience, "I charge you, before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. *The Lord has more truth to break forth out of his holy word.* Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you, remember it—'tis an article of your church covenant—that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God".

Strange sentiments are these to have been uttered two hundred and fifty years ago! They are not timidly suggested as if dealing with ideas that were as yet uncertain and unfamiliar. Mark the boldness, the decision here expressed. How foreign to that age. How rare in any age. Slowly indeed have they been accepted even by generations since the grave received the dust of the beloved and glorious pastor of Leyden. He seems to have caught the very spirit of the New Testament. He held it closely; he caused it to be fully and distinctly seen by his people; he impressed it upon their hearts, and together they practised it in their lives. What tribute should we not pay to one

whom the Lord thus honored so far in advance of his fellow-men. Could it be possible that the teachings of such a man of God, sitting on the mount of vision, should be lost upon the loving people who sat so willingly at his feet? We may safely affirm that the Plymouth Pilgrims were worthy disciples of such a teacher. Guided by the simple principles gathered from the Bible, and explained by their leaders, they mastered the great problems of civil and religious liberty.

In behalf of civil liberty their work has long been acknowledged. Their expectation had been to settle in the territory of New Virginia. To their amazement they found themselves in the waters of New England. The charter they had brought with them was valid only in Virginia. But those noble men were equal to the trying emergency. In a few short lines they drew up a compact which was the corner stone of popular constitutional liberty. To a little church conducted according to the congregational polity of the Pilgrims, Thomas Jefferson acknowledged his indebtedness for his best ideas for the government of the American Colonies.

But to this humble band of exiles landing on the "ice-clad rocks of Plymouth" we are still more deeply indebted for that inestimable blessing, the freedom of conscience which we now enjoy. The world has not yet fully appreciated the services of the Pilgrim Fathers in securing religious toleration as a fundamental principle of American institutions. The real sentiments and practices of these large hearted christians are not always understood. We often confound the colonists at Plymouth with those who ten years later settled around Massachusetts Bay. It is but just to notice certain points of difference between the two colonies. In so doing we shall not honor the Puri-

tans less but the Pilgrims more. The men of the "Massachusetts colony" were Puritans; but they had not severed their connection with the Established Church of England; they never, to any extent certainly, adopted congregational principles and forms of worship till they reached America; says Bancroft of their leading divines, "Even Higginson, and Hooker, and Cotton, were still ministers of the Church of England." The founders of the "Plymouth colony," however, had long since become "Separatists" from the mother church, coming out fully from the pompous forms and lordly government which then prevailed, and adopting the simplicity of congregational ideas. The fathers of Salem and Boston were not a few of them "men of large fortune." The Plymouth fathers represented a sturdy but humbler class; and as the only method of obtaining their outfit, they were under the necessity of pledging their daily toil for seven years. The Colonists around the Bay brought with them aristocratic ideas and practices, and their first form of government was an "elective aristocracy." At Plymouth, on the other hand, the utmost simplicity and the purest democracy prevailed. The leading minds of the Puritans were not always in fullest sympathy with the sentiments of the people, and their plans were overruled by the freemen; the fourth year had not passed before "the people established a reformation of such things as they judged to be amiss in the government." But among the Pilgrims there was the most cordial union and sympathy. The government of the Puritans at Boston, judged by the greater light of the present day, was sometimes arbitrary, severe, and intolerant. The authority at Plymouth, however, was exercised with no such intolerance. The Puritans admitted none to the rights of freemen unless they were members of some

church in the colony. The Pilgrims were more liberal, extending the privilege to every male colonist over twenty-one years of age; thus Miles Standish, their military captain, was never a member of any church. It is charged that the Puritan Colony was dogmatic, contentious, in frequent conflicts of opinion, and torn by fearful delusions. Of the Pilgrim Colony it may be safely affirmed that they lived in much greater peace, and though at times disturbed they were never disgraced by sectarian disputes, or rent by the errors of superstition. From the colony around the Bay, Roger Williams was banished. By the Plymouth men he was received and for two years remained a member of their church. Under the Puritan government the severest laws were enacted against the Quakers, some of whom were whipped, and some were executed. "To the honor of the Plymouth colony, be it observed, that though the provocations of the Quakers were equally as great there as elsewhere, yet they never made any sanguinary or capital laws against that sect."

We perceive, therefore, that a wide difference exists, and a clear distinction should be made between the Puritans and the Pilgrims; between the colony at Boston, and at Plymouth. That the men of the Mayflower were purer in heart, we may not presume to assert. But no doubt they were wiser. They did not make such sad mistakes. Their record is without stain. The blood of their fellow men never flowed because of their superstition and intolerance. From first to last, in England, in Holland, in America, their character stands forth with rare purity and grandeur. Fewer wrongs and fewer mistakes probably attach to them than to any other church or colony since the apostolic days. Our admiration rises as we know them better.

The more closely their history is investigated the brighter does it shine. Our ablest historians award them the highest honor. The first orators of the nation have found in the simple annals and lofty motives of the Pilgrims a theme worthy of the truest eloquence. Among intelligent readers of our country's history, the most loyal to the nation are the most loyal to Plymouth Rock.

The manners, the customs, the modes of thought, the sumptuary laws of the Pilgrim exiles, were indeed different from those of the present century; and at many of their ways and notions we smile. These, however, are minor matters. But can we mention one—yes even one fundamental principle in affairs of church or state cherished by us to-day, that was unknown, and unpractised by the founders of New England two hundred and fifty years ago! They were the advanced champions for the equal rights of man at the bar of civil justice, and in the sight of the King of kings. Their principle to practice and defend was, "A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King."

But it is asked, Would not thousands of men and women now do just what the Pilgrims did? In one sense, certainly they would. So would men now fight for the same principles contended for by the heroes of '76. So do men now denounce the corruptions of the papacy which aroused the indignation of Martin Luther. So do they now protest against intolerance in religion as did Roger Williams. It is by no means so difficult to imitate a good example as to originate the copy. The Pilgrims originated ideas and practices, which to their children have become as "Household Words." Or rather, it should be said, the Pilgrims were original in drawing their ideas with such remarkable simplicity and system from

the Holy Scriptures. They were pre-eminently Bible men. This volume they regarded with profoundest reverence as the only and the sufficient Revelation of God. In it they believed were revealed all the principles and precepts necessary for the government, the elevation, the happiness, and the salvation of man. It was moreover a cardinal doctrine in Pilgrim faith that what God had revealed, man was to obey to the letter. Their confidence in Jehovah and in the blessings promised to obedience, was unbounded. Theirs was a faith like that of Abraham, and Elijah, and Jeremiah, and the prophets. Before the Almighty they were the humblest of his children; and yet in the execution of duty as the children of God, before every danger and hardship, they were lofty in spirit and the bravest of the brave.

These profound religious convictions, derived unpolluted from Divine Revelation, and applied to the duties of life with such "large round-about common sense" formed the secret of the glory and power of the Pilgrims.

What would be the attitude of christianity to-day had the first colonists of New England been only as the settlers of Virginia or Maryland or Canada? In vain should we look for the New England Sabbath, so sacredly guarded by our fathers. And how should this nation have felt as it has the predominant influence of the Holy Scriptures, the only enduring charter of human liberty, and eternal happiness? How long since would the American Republic have crumbled to atoms, if indeed she had ever won an independent existence, had not her foundations been laid by men who to all their work applied so faithfully the line and plummet of conscience and the Word of God?

In this Two Hundred and Fiftieth year from the Landing of the Pilgrims, it is proposed by the Congregational

churches of the land to honor the memory of these noble men in a peculiar manner. New England has given America all her highest honor and distinction as a nation ; Pilgrim principles have given to six narrow states their controlling influence.

It is worthy therefore that Congregational churches should honor the memory of these fathers of New England, and fathers of *Congregationalism*.

A Memorial Building is to be erected in Boston dedicated to the memory and principles of the Pilgrims. That it is fitting thus to commemorate the beloved and honored dead seems too evident to require argument.

If proof be needed, let the great monument erected in Germany to the memory of Luther bear witness. Let the majestic column that rises on Bunker Hill plead eloquently for a Pilgrim Monument. Let each memorial Tablet, each memorial Hall erected to the memory of the noble dead in nearly every one of the cities and towns of our northern states — yes let every cherished and beautified cemetery, every monument or simple stone that affection and piety have raised to perpetuate the memory of a noble ancestry — let all bring witness to the propriety and duty of a national memorial to the men who planted and moulded the institutions of New England.

Let it stand prominent on the streets of our metropolis, reminding the passer-by that religion is mightier than commerce ; that faith and prayer, and obedience to God, achieved what wealth and power could not accomplish. It will remind the people of the debt we are under to the solid christian principles of our Forefathers. In an age of materialism it will draw attention to men whose immortal fame springs from their unwavering and all-conquering faith in God. In the face of the things that are seen and

temporal it will exalt the things that are unseen and eternal. It will impress the beholder with the truth of Scripture, "Them that honor me I will honor." It will serve to awaken ever-renewing interest in the history of this "colony of conscience"—this colony of the Bible. In the hearts of the children of many generations this Pilgrim Memorial will awaken the oft returning questions,

"Those daring men, those gentle wives, say, wherefore do they come?
 Why rend they all the tender ties of kindred and of home?
 'Tis *Heaven* assigns their noble work, man's spirit to unbind:
 They came not for themselves alone — they came for all mankind:
 And to the empire of the west this glorious boon they bring—
 A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King!

And still their spirit, in their sons, with freedom walks abroad;
 The Bible is our only creed, our only Sovereign, God!
 The hand is raised, the word is spoke, the joyful pledge is given—
 And boldly on our banner floats, in the free air of heaven,
 The motto of our sainted sires, and loud we'll make it ring—
 A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King.

NOTE. — On 7th page, 5th line from bottom, for "first year," please read "first years."

The more closely their history is investigated the brighter does it shine. Our ablest historians award them the highest honor. The first orators of the nation have found in the simple annals and lofty motives of the Pilgrims a theme worthy of the truest eloquence. Among intelligent readers of our country's history, the most loyal to the nation are the most loyal to Plymouth Rock.

The manners, the customs, the modes of thought, the sumptuary laws of the Pilgrim exiles, were indeed different from those of the present century; and at many of their ways and notions we smile. These, however, are minor matters. But can we mention one—yes even one fundamental principle in affairs of church or state cherished by us to-day, that was unknown, and unpractised by the founders of New England two hundred and fifty years ago? They were the advanced champions for the equal rights of man at the bar of civil justice, and in the sight of the King of kings. Their principle to practice and defend was, "A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King."

But it is asked, Would not thousands of men and women now do just what the Pilgrims did? In one sense, certainly they would. So would men now fight for the same principles contended for by the heroes of '76. So do men now denounce the corruptions of the papacy which aroused the indignation of Martin Luther. So do they now protest against intolerance in religion as did Roger Williams. It is by no means so difficult to imitate a good example as to originate the copy. The Pilgrims originated ideas and practices, which to their children have become as "Household Words." Or rather, it should be said, the Pilgrims were original in drawing their ideas with such remarkable simplicity and system from

the Holy Scriptures. They were pre-eminently Bible men. This volume they regarded with profoundest reverence as the only and the sufficient Revelation of God. In it they believed were revealed all the principles and precepts necessary for the government, the elevation, the happiness, and the salvation of man. It was moreover a cardinal doctrine in Pilgrim faith that what God had revealed, man was to obey to the letter. Their confidence in Jehovah and in the blessings promised to obedience, was unbounded. Theirs was a faith like that of Abraham, and Elijah, and Jeremiah, and the prophets. Before the Almighty they were the humblest of his children; and yet in the execution of duty as the children of God, before every danger and hardship, they were lofty in spirit and the bravest of the brave.

These profound religious convictions, derived unpolluted from Divine Revelation, and applied to the duties of life with such "large round-about common sense" formed the secret of the glory and power of the Pilgrims.

What would be the attitude of christianity to-day had the first colonists of New England been only as the settlers of Virginia or Maryland or Canada? In vain should we look for the New England Sabbath, so sacredly guarded by our fathers. And how should this nation have felt as it has the predominant influence of the Holy Scriptures, the only enduring charter of human liberty, and eternal happiness? How long since would the American Republic have crumbled to atoms, if indeed she had ever won an independent existence, had not her foundations been laid by men who to all their work applied so faithfully the line and plummet of conscience and the Word of God?

In this Two Hundred and Fiftieth year from the Landing of the Pilgrims, it is proposed by the Congregational

churches of the land to honor the memory of these noble men in a peculiar manner. New England has given America all her highest honor and distinction as a nation ; Pilgrim principles have given to six narrow states their controlling influence.

It is worthy therefore that Congregational churches should honor the memory of these fathers of New England, and fathers of *Congregationalism*.

A Memorial Building is to be erected in Boston dedicated to the memory and principles of the Pilgrims. That it is fitting thus to commemorate the beloved and honored dead seems too evident to require argument.

If proof be needed, let the great monument erected in Germany to the memory of Luther bear witness. Let the majestic column that rises on Bunker Hill plead eloquently for a Pilgrim Monument. Let each memorial Tablet, each memorial Hall erected to the memory of the noble dead in nearly every one of the cities and towns of our northern states — yes let every cherished and beautified cemetery, every monument or simple stone that affection and piety have raised to perpetuate the memory of a noble ancestry — let all bring witness to the propriety and duty of a national memorial to the men who planted and moulded the institutions of New England.

Let it stand prominent on the streets of our metropolis, reminding the passer-by that religion is mightier than commerce ; that faith and prayer, and obedience to God, achieved what wealth and power could not accomplish. It will remind the people of the debt we are under to the solid christian principles of our Forefathers. In an age of materialism it will draw attention to men whose immortal fame springs from their unwavering and all-conquering faith in God. In the face of the things that are seen and

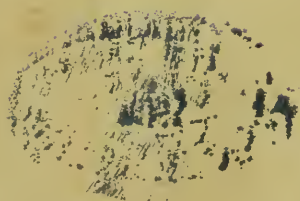
temporal it will exalt the things that are unseen and eternal. It will impress the beholder with the truth of Scripture, "Them that honor me I will honor." It will serve to awaken ever-renewing interest in the history of this "colony of conscience"—this colony of the Bible. In the hearts of the children of many generations this Pilgrim Memorial will awaken the oft returning questions,

"Those daring men, those gentle wives, say, wherefore do they come?
 Why rend they all the tender ties of kindred and of home?
 'Tis *Heaven* assigns their noble work, man's spirit to unbind:
 They came not for themselves alone — they came for all mankind:
 And to the empire of the west this glorious boon they bring—
 A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King!

And still their spirit, in their sons, with freedom walks abroad:
 The Bible is our only creed, our only Sovereign, God!
 The hand is raised, the word is spoke, the joyful pledge is given—
 And boldly on our banner floats, in the free air of heaven,
 The motto of our sainted sires, and loud we'll make it ring—
 A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King.

NOTE. — On 7th page, 5th line from bottom, for "first year," please read "first years."





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 069 267 0

